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# RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Written statement*/ submitted by the Islamic Women's Institute of Iran, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[12 January 2001]

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*/ This written statement is issued, unedited, as received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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1-Today, we are living in a world that is at the threshold of globalization and is going forward in all areas with remarkable speed. The existence of international agreements and commitment of different nations to them facilitate the process of globalization and provide the appropriate mechanisms for this global movement. Convention on Rights of the Child, which most states have joined it, is an example of these kinds of agreements. This convention calls upon different nations, despite the cultural differences among them, to have common and clear view on children and their rights in order to raise a healthy, informed and free generation.

2-Since growth and development of a society is impossible without an efficient, thoughtful and free human resource, and since training of this resource begins from childhood, paying attention to the children and informing them of their rights are extremely important. Our society, alleged to be a young society, should follow the development programs relying on this creative and high- potential generation, and in order to be a developed country, it should move ahead more rapidly. It is our duty to identify the obstacles to the growth and development and try to remove them. Various articles of the CRC provide us with the general principals required for children's progression and, in our opinion, joining the convention and it's full performance can increasingly evolve the society.

3-Islamic Republic of Iran joined the Convention on Rights of the Child with a reservation. In recent years, especially from the beginning of the presidency career of Mr.Khatami and appearance of new civil organization in different fields, we have made some progresses in recognizing the rights of the child, however, we can not claim that we have wholly performed the convention or have taken great steps to achieve the purposes of the CRC.

4-In the area of controlling the population, which is the first step to respect rights of the child, and, in relation to the children's health that is essential for raising a healthy generation who would be able to protect it's rights relying on physical and mental health, we have increasingly put an end to the sexual discrimination in education at high schools and universities. For instance, more girls have been entered the universities than boys since two years ago.

5-The problem of laboring children has not been solved yet, because of financial problem. Unfortunately, as there is no official and valid statistics, it is almost impossible to illustrate the situation but many children especially little girls do lots of laborious works such as shepherd, carpet weaving and farming in the villages; suburbanites, who have migrated from their villages for some reasons, use the children as a means of making a living.

6-Situated on the route of drug transportation from eastern countries such as Afghanistan to Europe, Iran is seriously involved in the destructive problem of drug abuse and to overcome this dilemma , universal cooperation and planning is required. The problems of addiction and its extreme prevalence not only threaten Iranian young people but also have the most destructive effect on children. These children who are exposed to the increasingly addiction of their parents and people around them,

gradually become drug dealer, drug abuser and, finally, criminal; they also will be abused in different ways even sexually or will be sold as a good. But governmental and non-governmental organization's efforts in relation to this regrettable situation had no desirable result.

7-As young girls suffering from different kinds of sexual discrimination in the family and society do not enjoy legal protection, they escape from homes. This subject as an inevitable fact has been taken into consideration of the governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations. Some runaway girls are found in Tehran daily that a bad and regrettable fate is waiting for them. Although establishment of the centers for gathering these runaway children has been useful action, there are lots of deficiencies in this area.

8-The process of amendment of statutes contradictory to the CRC such as age of puberty and age of marriage encountered with some problems. Article 220, Islamic Code of Penalty, which lays down father and paternal grandfather enjoys immunity from retaliation, is still applicable and children particularly young girls are obliged to obey the wrong traditions and for the lack of legal protection they do not dare to object.

9-It is clear that expressing these issues in international gatherings results from two insights. Firstly, we believe that in the process of globalization, we are part of the world, so hereby we request other countries for cooperation and thinking alike. Secondly, we hope to benefit of other countries' experiences, which were in the same situation but could overcome their problems. We always believe that stating the problem is the first step to find the solution and by ignoring the present problems, they will be more complicated.

10-Islamic Institute of the Women as a non-governmental organization, protecting rights of the women and children, is always trying to recognize the roots of the problems in the society and to tackle them as far as possible. We reach out our hands to those international organizations that are considered as advocates and protector of the world's oppressed children. We also request all international organization including Human Rights Commission and UNISEF to take the situation of our children into consideration and provide us with the appropriate means to improve their life. We think that it is impossible to set forth issues related to children and their rights in isolation from other issues of the society and they have to be considered in a close relationship with other issues. However, we believe that prevention is better than cure and if we start this task from our children with the help of international organization. Perhaps, these healthy people who are informed of these rights can control our society in a better way and be successful in problem solving.

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